United Nations S/2011/591

Security Council

Distr.: General
22 September 2011

Original: English

Letter dated 21 September 2011 from the Secretary-General to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to refer to my report of 30 August 2011 (S/2011/549) on Somalia, in which I expressed concern about the critical gaps that remain in the United Nations support package for the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and which continue to adversely impact the effectiveness of AMISOM.

In the report I stated that expanding the scope of the support package to provide predictable and sustainable funding for AMISOM would be consistent with the spirit of Security Council resolution 1863 (2009) and contribute significantly towards raising AMISOM to United Nations standards, while also markedly improving the living conditions and morale of AMISOM troops. I committed to proposing to the Security Council a workable solution to this problem.

My report also highlighted the joint assessment by AMISOM, the United Nations Political Office for Somalia, the United Nations Support Office for AMISOM and the Department for Safety and Security, which emphasized the need for a dedicated capacity within AMISOM to provide security to United Nations personnel and AMISOM civilians. I stated that as the international community expands its footprint, strengthened security arrangements are essential. Accordingly, I expressed support for the rapid deployment of a guard force.

The purpose of this letter is to provide more information about the inclusion of some additional support requirements for AMISOM troops into the United Nations support package, and the proposed AMISOM guard force.

These proposals are made with due cognizance that Member States of the United Nations continue to shoulder the high costs of ongoing peacekeeping operations around the world. As these proposals will require additional financing from Member States, efforts have been made to ensure that the additional resources requested are modest, while also achieving the objective of addressing the most urgent needs of AMISOM.

Additional support requirements

Both the United Nations and the African Union require troop-contributing countries to deploy to peacekeeping missions on a sustainable basis. In United Nations peacekeeping operations such sustainment comprises basic and essential supplies and services, for example, catering; tactical communications and information technology (IT); cleaning and sanitary supplies; and welfare, which

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would be reimbursed to troop contributors that have deployed with limited sustainment capabilities. There is a need for enhanced support in certain areas in order to improve standards and provide a better quality of life for AMISOM troops. I therefore propose that the United Nations include the following additional support requirements in its logistical support package to AMISOM:

Additional support requirement	*Description*
Catering	Catering: provision of equipment (stoves, reefers, pots, pans, kitchen uniforms, etc.) and training to ensure preparation of safe rations according to standards
Communications and IT	Additional VHF/UHF, HF, telephone, TETRA communications for additional troops to ensure secure communication across AMISOM forces
General stores, cleaning, furniture	General supplies, including sanitary and cleaning materials, some furniture, stationery, etc.
Welfare	Sports and entertainment equipment to allow temporary relief in a high stress environment

I look forward to the Security Council giving favourable consideration to this proposal. AMISOM operates in a very dangerous environment in pursuit of a difficult mandate on behalf of the international community. It is therefore necessary that AMISOM forces be accorded this essential support to enhance their effectiveness, well-being and morale.

AMISOM guard force

At present, the responsibility for the security of the United Nations personnel, assets and AMISOM civilians rests with AMISOM. It provides escort and protection for United Nations personnel and Very Important Persons when travelling outside the secure Mogadishu International Airport compound for meetings with the Transitional Federal Government officials or to visit sites further afield. However, these responsibilities have proved to be a strain on the limited resources of AMISOM. I recommend that a dedicated guard force be established to perform the following functions:

- Provide security at key African Union and United Nations installations
- Provide security of AMISOM personnel and assets
- Provision of armed escort for the safe movement of personnel and assets
- Provide support during emergency situations such as relocation or evacuation to secure sites.

The force would be a dedicated unit of AMISOM, although under the overall command of the Force Commander. As the AMISOM military concept of operations envisages a total force strength of 12,000 for its current responsibilities, the requested guard force would be within the current mandated strength of AMISOM.

The guard force would be of an appropriate size in order to effectively perform the envisaged tasks, which would include the following:

Tasks
Protection of African Union civilian and United Nations common compound within Mogadishu International Airport
Protection of African Union/United Nations information support compound/ communication hub
Protection of forward logistics base
Protection of United Nations compound at seaport
Protection of United Nations compound at university camp
Protection of United Nations common compound in Mogadishu
Escort African Union/United Nations/international missions outside Mogadishu International Airport
Mobile reserve
Command control and support staff

The guard force would receive from the United Nations the same logistical support package offered to the rest of the AMISOM force.

I look forward to a favourable consideration of this proposal by the Council.

(*Signed*) **BAN** Ki-moon